

Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission

Minutes of July 22, 2020

Members Present: Shannon Neveaux, Sandra Reaux, Eric Adcock, Odile Segrest, Bill Comeaux, Shalana Francis
Members Absent: Angela LeBlanc (illness), Karen Broussard, Tammy Gordon
Others Present: Alison Miller

The meeting was called to order and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Since both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman could not be in attendance, Alison Miller welcomed all in attendance at the meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed the Agenda. There were no additions or changes.

There were no guest in attendance at the meeting.

A motion was made by Shannon Neveaux, seconded by Eric Adcock, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of Wednesday, March 18, 2020 as written.

Alison Miller provided the Commission with the financial information and provided information on ACT 184 that requires short term rentals to begin collecting occupancy tax. A motion was made by Shannon Neveaux, seconded by Sandra Reaux, and unanimously carried to approve the Treasurer's Report and payment of bills as presented.

Since our March meeting, two new Commissioners have been appointed to the Commission: Bill Comeaux (Erath) and Shalana Francis (Maurice). The Commission went around the room and introduced themselves to the new Commissioners. Alison Miller provided the new Commissioners with some background information on the Commission and will schedule a Board Orientation next month.

Alison Miller provided the Commission with an update on tourism activities, webinars and teleconferences that she has been attending on behalf of the Commission. She also informed the Commission that VPTC has been awarded two grants from the Louisiana Office of Tourism. The first grant was for \$3,000 and had to be used for marketing during the month of June. VPTC placed banner ads on several food-related sites through a Hoffman Media Summer Promotion Package. The next grant is a 2020-2021 Cooperative Marketing Grant for \$17,610.95. Alison Miller also provided the Commission with an update on Grand Reveil Acadien, which has been postponed until October 2021, and a Main Street Grant that she has helped the City of Abbeville on. This grant features large window signs advertising the food, festivals, shopping, attractions, etc. that are located in Abbeville. Since our office helped with the grant and the designs, our website was added on the signs.

Alison Miller provided the Commission with samples of the new advertising campaign she created to highlight our parish's food, music, festivals, etc. The campaign also ties in our French language and focuses on our friendliness, our culture and heritage and that we are affordable. The new ads will begin running in the Fall. Alison Miller will obtain a price for updating our website with the new ad designs. A brief discussion was held on new photography options and a social media campaign featuring our food and music. The Commissioners liked the new ads and approved the campaign.

Since most of the state's advertising has switched to "staycations" and digital ads, *The Advocate* is offering a discounted advertising rate on NOLA.com's weekly Staycations e-newsletter for \$450 week. Alison Miller suggested using some of the BP Grant funds since a few budgeted items have been cancelled or come in at a lower cost. A motion was made by Shannon Neveaux, seconded by Bill Comeaux, and unanimously carried to advertise on the Staycations e-newsletter for a few weeks.

A couple of CDs have matured and are no longer gaining interest. Alison Miller has obtained the best rate possible of 0.35% for 12 months at the current bank, IberiaBank. Alison Miller will check the rates again before she renews the other CD and go with the best rate at the time. A motion was made by Eric Adcock, seconded by Odile Segrest, and unanimously carried to renew the CD at Iberiabank for 12 months.

Shannon Neveaux updated the Commission on activities being cancelled at Palmetto Island State Park and requested 100 ditty bags and promotional items for the Latanier Cookers who will be attending the State Dutch Oven Gathering next month.

Eric Adcock informed the Commission that the Vermilion Historical Society has been contacted by an archivist who is interested in researching the Morgan Effigy that is housed at the Abbeville Cultural Center/Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission. Mr. Adcock and Mrs. Miller will meet to discuss this further.

Bill Comeaux inquired about obtaining our Vermilion Parish brochures to have on hand at the Acadian Museum in Erath. Alison Miller will gather brochures for Mr. Comeaux.

The next meeting of the Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission will be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 3:30 pm at Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Odile Segrest, seconded by Bill Comeaux, and unanimously carried to adjourn.

Minutes taken and respectively submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Miller".

Alison Miller, VPTC Secretary